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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 H-02 /053 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2828
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
JCS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 3336

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, RP
SUBJECT: MANILA PRESS HIGHLIGHTS U.S. CONGRESSIONAL VOTE AGAINST
CUTS IN U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PHILIPPINES

1. TWO OF MAJOR PHILIPPINES DAILIES (DAILY EXPRESS AND
TIMES HOURNAL) TODAY GAVE PROMINENT FRONT PAGE TREATMENT
TO PNA STORY OUT OF WASHINGTON REPORTING DEFEAT OF AMEND-
MENT TO REDUCE U.S.
MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PHILIPPINES.
COMPLETE TEXT OF STORY, WHICH WE BELIEVE WAS WRITTEN BY
PNA CORRESPONDENT ALBERTO ALFARO, FOLLOWS:
QUOTE: THE PHILIPPINES HAS WON A SIGNIFICANT VICTORY
IN THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS.

A BIPARTISAN GROUP OF U.S. CONGRESSMEN OVERWHELMINGLY
VOTED DOWN WEDNESDAY AN AMENDMENT TO REDUCE U.S. MILITARY
ASSISTANCE TO THE PHILIPPINES FROM $19.6 TO $6.6 MILLION.

THE HOUSE, ON A DIVISION, VOTED 46 TO 16 TO REJECT
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THE AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY REPRESENTATIVE BEDELL BERKELEY

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OF IOWA, EDWARD KOCH OF NEW YORK AND FORTNEY STARK OF CALIFORNIA DURING THE DEBATES ON THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1976.

THE TRIP URGED THE CUT IN AID TO REVERSE WHAT THEY TERMED AS "THE PATTERN OF ESCALATING MILITARY AID TO THE PHILIPPINES" AND TO "SERVE NOTICE TO THE WORLD THAT WE STAND FOR FREEDOM IN THE PHILIPPINES."

ANTI-GOVERNMENT FORCES HERE HAVE TRIED HARD TO COMPEL CONGRESS TO CUT OFF ARMS AID TO THE PHILIPPINES.

BUT THE MAJORITY, LED BY REPRESENTATIVES WILLIAM BROOMFIELD OF MICHIGAN AND THOMAS MORGAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE, REJECTED THE AMENDMENT AND INSTEAD STRESSED THE NEED TO STRENGHTEN INTERNAL SECURITY OF THE PHILIPPINES AGAINS THE FORCES THAT ARE NOW SEEKING TO UNDERMINE IT.

THEY ALSO UNDERSCORED THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF U.S. BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES IN THE CONTEXT OF AMERICAN SECURITY AND BRANDED AS PREMATURE ATTEMPTS AT THIS TIME TO PUNISH THE PHILIPPINES FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WITH-OUT ADEQUATE INFORMATION ON THE MATTER.

"WE HAVE A VERY SIGNIFICANT SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PHILIPPINES. I THINK THAT IF WE ARE GOING TO MAKE A JUDG-MENT TO TERMINATE OR REDUCE THE LEVEL OF OUR ASSISTANCE TO THE PHILIPPINES, IT OUGHT TO BE ON THE BASIS OF ESTABLISHED PROCEDURE" BROOMFIELD SAID.

HE WAS REFERRING TO THE MECHANISM THAT WOULD BE SET UP UNDER THE BILL TO INQUIRE INTO ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN COUNTRIES RECEIVING U.S. MILITARY AID.

BROOMFIELD ADDED THAT "I DO FEEL THAT HERE IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE WHERE IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO BE PLACING RESTRIC-TIONS ON THE BILL WHEN THE PHILIPPINES MEANS SO MUCH TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD. THAT IS WHY I SAY I THINK IF VIEW OF THOSE BASES (SUBIC NAVAL BASE CONFIDENTIAL

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AND CLARK AIR FORCE BASE) ARE CONCERNED AND THE RELATIONS OF THE PHILIPPINES WITH THE UNITED STATES THAT I WOULD HAVE TO OPPOSE THE AMENDMENT."

REP. STEPHEN SOLARZ OF NEW YORK SAID "IT IS NOT REALLY ACCURATE TO SAY THAT THEY (THE PHILIPPINES) FACE NO EXTERNAL THREATS. THEY FACE TWO VERY PERSISTENT REBELLIONS. THEY FACE THE MUSLIM REBELLION AND SUPPORT THAT COMES FROM OUTSIDE

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THE COUNTRY. ALSO THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ARMED BANDS CALLED COMMUNIST NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY."

MORGAN CALLED THE ATTENTION OF THE HOUSE TO THE EXISTING RP-US TREATIES AND WARNED THAT THE AMENDMENT WOULD VIOLATE THEM.

"THIS IS A MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY BUTTRESSED BY SUBIC BAY AND CALRK FIELD AGREEMENTS WHERE WE GET FREE RENT AND WE HAVE AGREED TO A MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE PHILIPPINES. THEY (THE PROPONENTS) JUST COME IN HERE AND SCUTTLE IT AT THIS TIME WHICH IS A VIOLATION OF OUR TREATY OBLIGATION TO A FRIENDLY NATION," MORGAN SAID.

REP. WAYNE HAYS OF OHIL BEWAILED THE PRACTICE OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN ASSAILING FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS JUST BECAUSE THEY ADOPT A SYSTEM DIFFERENT TO THE UNITED STATES.

I JUST THINK THAT WE CANNOT PERFECT THESE GOVERNMENTS IN OUR OWN IMAGE. AND IF WE DID, MAYBE IT WOULD NOT BE EXACTLY THE WAY WE WANTED IT TO BE.," HAYS SAID.

REP EDWARD DERWINSKI OF ILLINOIS ASKED MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE TO KEEP IN MIND U.S. INVESTMENT IN SUBIC BAY AND CLARK AIR FORCE BASE. HE SAID, "I JUST DO NOT SEE WHERE AN AMENDMENT SUCH AS THIS WHICH DELIBERATELY SINGLES OUT THE PHILIPPINES FOR ONE SINGLE EXTRA BLOW FROM CONGRESS IS EITHER TIMELY, PRUDENT OR REALLY IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES. IT IS PROBABLY NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PHILIPPINES EITHER." END QUOTE.

2. COMMENT: THIS PNA ACCOUNT OF THE HOUSE DEBATE, HIGHLIGHTING, AS IT DOES, CONGRESSIONAL REASSURANCES ON THE CONTIN-
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UING IMPORTANCE OF THE US-PHILIPPINES SECURITY RELATIONSHIP, IS TIMELY AND BENEFICIAL IN VIEW OF THE APPROACHING BASE NEGOTATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE ATTEMPT TO REDUCE THE PHILIPPINE MAP PROGRAM WILL SERVE TO REMIND THE GOP THAT EVEN THOUGH IT CAME THROUGH THIS ROUND UNSCATHED, OPPONENTS TO THE REGIME ARE ENERGETICALLY PALYING TO RISING CONGRESSIONAL SENSITIVITY TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES.
SULLIVAN

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